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MEMORANDUM FOR : Director of Central Intelligence
THROUGH : Deputy Director (Research)
SUBJECT : Discussions with General Doolittle

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1. At the request of [redacted] a representative from the Central Intelligence Agency, [redacted] and a representative of the Air Force, Colonel Leo P. Geary, met in the Executive Offices of the White House to brief General James Doolittle. It was originally believed that the area of discussion would be limited to the Frank Powers affair (actual incident, interrogation, and subsequent Board of Inquiry), however, at General Doolittle's insistence the discussions were expanded to cover additional areas.

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2. Concerning the U-2 incident, General Doolittle indicated that he felt a personal responsibility to the Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board and to the President for the failure and subsequent embarrassment resulting from the loss of the U-2. His present concern is to insure that we do not in the future make the same mistakes as in the past. In this context, he was interested in knowing what our national policy would be in the future should another reconnaissance aircraft be lost under similar circumstances. What instructions would be given to the pilot with regard to self-destruction, disclosure of information, destruction of the aircraft, etc. In response to these queries, General Doolittle was advised that all of these questions were under consideration at present but firm and irrevocable policies had not yet been established. It was also affirmed that destruct devices for the aircraft, equipment, maps, etc. were being developed at the present time and were definitely part of any future operational program. Policy with regard to self-destruction by the pilot had not been resolved. General Doolittle expressed a profound interest in the map destruct kit being developed by Technical Services Division and requested that he be given a detailed briefing this same afternoon by a TSD representative. Arrangements were made accordingly.

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3. General Poolittle requested and was given a brief resume of the Powers' account of the 1 May incident and the findings of the Board of Inquiry. He expressed his reluctance, intellectually, to believe that the Soviets were unable, or made no greater effort than was apparent, to get more information from Powers and suggested that they probably used some subtle method (such as sodium pentathol orally administered), and had gotten much more information than even Powers was aware of. While not ruling out such a possibility completely, it was pointed out that all of those directly concerned with the interrogation of Powers on his return, including the CI Staff, Board of Inquiry members, etc. were of the opinion that such was not the case. Reference was also made to the C-118 shoot-down where the Soviet interrogators displayed incredible naivete in not recognizing the nature and identity of the personnel who had fallen into their hands, even though there was considerable evidence available in the plane and on the person of the individuals concerned.

4. [] then introduced into the discussion a list, prepared by the CI Staff shortly after the 1 May incident, containing all the sensitive items of which it was believed Frank Powers had knowledge as of the time of the shoot-down. He requested we respond either in the affirmative or negative as to whether Powers had disclosed information on these matters as he read them off. Of the items listed over 90% were responded to in the negative.

5. General Poolittle then returned to a discussion of future programs, namely OXCART, and posed a number of questions on the selection of pilots, training of pilots, status of the aircraft, command structure of the detachment, command control of the program, and, in particular, the cover story for the program. With regard to the latter, the General was advised that a cover story had been developed and was still under review with a view toward simplification if at all possible. The cover story had not as of this time been implemented because there had been no reason to do so from the standpoint of security leaks, incidents or press queries. On the other questions he posed, factual answers were given on pilot selection, aircraft status, detachment organization, etc. On the question of operational control of the program, which involved the NRO and policy decisions presently under discussion at high level, the briefing officers claimed no competency to answer or conjecture in this area.

JAMES A. CUNNINGHAM, JR.
Assistant Chief, DDP

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